

Michigan Emergency Management Assistance Compact (MEMAC)
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Good afternoon – I'm Captain John Ort, Deputy State Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in today's statewide videoconference regarding the Michigan Emergency Management Assistance Compact or what we call MEMAC.

I would also like to thank WKAR TV of East Lansing for broadcasting this conference to our 20 sites throughout Michigan and its upper peninsula.

Each site receiving this broadcast is being hosted by a state or local emergency management staff member. They are there to assist you and will be happy to bring back any questions or concerns you might have regarding MEMAC or this broadcast.

As commander of the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division, one of my many responsibilities is to provide coordination of emergency management activities across county, municipal, state, and federal governments.

One of those activities is to insure that we have state and local plans and procedures in place to respond to and recover from natural or human made emergencies or disasters.

The Michigan Emergency Management Assistance Compact or MEMAC, was formerly known as the Statewide Mutual Aid Compact (or what we then called SMAC), became an initiative of the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division long before the tragic events of 9-11, which as you know, required the intrastate mobilization of many local government resources to deal with that disaster.

As time and resources have allowed – we have strived to move this important initiative closer to statewide implementation.

Today's videoconference brings us one more step closer to implementation and will open the door for local governments to become participating members of MEMAC.

During the videoconference this afternoon, I will be providing you with an overview and update of MEMAC.

PROP (MEMAC Agreement Booklet)

As you came into your viewing site you were provided with a copy of the final MEMAC Agreement.

Additional copies of the agreement and supporting documentation can be found on our Emergency Management Division web site at: www.mspemd.org

In addition to the final draft MEMAC Agreement, we have posted some frequently asked questions on our web site as well.

Following the videoconference I would encourage you and your local governmental officials to read and review the MEMAC Agreement in its entirety.

Questions regarding the agreement or local government participation should be directed to Sgt. Kevin Mark of our Homeland Security Section at telephone (517) 336-6429 or e-mail markk@michigan.gov

Modeled after intrastate mutual aid compacts already being successfully implemented in other states, MEMAC is designed to help Michigan's 1,776 local political subdivisions share vital public safety services and resources more effectively and efficiently.

Neither the state nor any local jurisdiction can afford to acquire and maintain all the personnel, equipment and other resources necessary to respond to every possible emergency or major disaster, especially terrorist acts involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive weapons of mass destruction.

As Secretary Ridge of the Department of Homeland Security has stated many times – there will never be enough local, state or federal dollars available to make every local emergency response discipline as fully capable as another.

We must work together to develop an intrastate assistance compact that will allow the sharing of our vital governmental resources during a crisis or disaster.

After all, when tragedy or terror strikes, our communities and citizens will expect their government to respond to their emergency public health and safety needs without forethought or regard for where that vital service or life line is coming from or geographically located.

The Department of Homeland Security, the National Emergency Management Association and the International Association of Fire Chiefs have all gone on record – urging all states to implement intrastate mutual assistance compacts as yet another step in improving our homeland security and emergency management preparedness efforts.

MEMAC creates an organized process and structure spelled out in advance for jurisdictions large and small across the state to render or receive assistance in times of

crisis. It addresses many administrative and problematic issues before intrastate assistance is provided and received.

MEMAC establishes procedures to request mutual assistance for any participating government that becomes affected by, or is under imminent threat of, a disaster, an emergency, or other serious threat to public health and safety.

MEMAC sets forth the terms and conditions governing reimbursement for assistance rendered by participating governments.

MEMAC resolves issues concerning the insurance and liability coverage of emergency workers when responding from one locality to another and takes full advantage of opportunities for state/federal reimbursement of eligible costs.

Designed to be flexible, MEMAC is also intended to supplement rather than replace existing, local mutual aid agreements already in place to handle "routine" public safety services among neighboring jurisdictions and fire departments.

A necessary element for the success of MEMAC is the adoption of a standardized Incident Command System (or what is called ICS) for all participating agencies and jurisdictions. ICS has been used effectively by the fire service for many years, and it provides for a unified command structure when multiple agencies and jurisdictions must respond to a major event. Local ICS also provides local control at the scene of an event.

Local jurisdictions and agencies that choose to participate in MEMAC are required to utilize the National Fire Academy's Incident Command System. I might also add that ICS training is provided by the Emergency Management Division as apart of our Homeland Security Strategy.

This familiar and well-tested NFA ICS model was unanimously endorsed by representatives from a variety of local government and public safety stakeholder organizations at a meeting held in Lansing on October 25, 2001.

Effective May 1, 2002, the Michigan Emergency Management Act, being Public Act 390 of 1976, was amended to authorize the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division to develop and administer MEMAC as a part of ongoing planning and coordination responsibilities.

MEMAC is limited to the exchange of personnel, equipment, and other resources in times of emergency, disaster or other serious threats to public health or safety. These arrangements for resources are required to be consistent with the Michigan Emergency Management Plan and our State Homeland Security Strategy.

The Emergency Management Division hosted a statewide, interactive videoconference similar to this one back on November 20, 2001. The videoconference was broadcast to

14 audience sites throughout the state. The videoconference was conducted to provide local governments and public safety officials with an overview of the proposed compact along with the opportunity to provide further comments and suggested revisions prior to the preparation of the final draft agreement.

Based on the input received from many of you in today's audience, the draft agreement was edited and revised to address many of the local government and public safety concerns.

I'm pleased to report that the final draft agreement has been reviewed and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region V Office, our State Attorney General's Office, and the Governor's Office.

In just a moment I will tell you how your governmental jurisdiction can become a member of MEMAC but let me first address some key points and commonly asked questions about MEMAC.

MEMAC is intended for governmental entities only – non-governmental agencies are not included as signatories because they can not be a requesting agency under MEMAC (as they can not provide reciprocate services).

We are often asked the question – How would this agreement affect privately owned ambulance or EMS providers? Private and private non-profit EMS in responding to a request for assistance will provide services on a contractual basis equivalent to their existing business practices and they will be reimbursed for their services in accordance with existing FEMA policy and rules.

MEMAC should not be confused with what we call EMAC or the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. Back in January of 2002, Michigan passed legislation allowing it to become the 43rd State to be a member of EMAC. EMAC is an interstate mutual aid compact that allows participating states to send or accept personnel, equipment, technical support and other forms of assistance between states. Typically those are state agency resources (e.g., state police, national guard, highway trucks and crews) that are under the control of the governors of the assisting states, rather than assets from local governments. MEMAC is an intrastate assistance compact among local political subdivisions within the state of Michigan. MEMAC does not involve any authority or plans for the governor to mobilize or send local personnel or assets out of state.

Another common question asked is – who inventories the resources that each signatory possesses in order to determine the best agency to respond to a requesting party? The Emergency Management Division will maintain a statewide resource and asset database in the State Emergency Operations Center and we look forward to building that inventory with your help and assistance. Additionally, the Emergency Management Division will also maintain and make available to you a directory or listing of all governmental jurisdictions and agencies participating in MEMAC.

A common Fire Service question posed is – does reimbursement include the costs of backfilling personnel deployed to an incident under MEMAC? Requesting agencies are only responsible for deployment costs of assisting personnel and resources. MEMAC and FEMA guidelines do not recognize or reimburse for costs associated with the backfill of personnel at the assisting agency.

One final common question asked is – if adopted, will this agreement negate the need for an inter-county mutual aid agreement where neighboring counties often cross county lines for fire responses? Not at all – MEMAC does not replace or supersede existing local mutual aid agreements. Participating governments would by design invoke MEMAC only when they require assistance not available from existing mutual aid agreements.

Again – I would encourage you to review the agreement in its entirety and visit our web site for a list of many more frequently asked questions as we simply do not have the time to address all of your question or concerns during this broadcast. Sgt. Mark is also available by telephone to assist you as well.

Now - How can you become a participating member of MEMAC?

Counties, municipalities, townships, political subdivisions, and interlocal public agencies can become a party to MEMAC by submitting the following three documents to the Emergency Management Division: An original signed copy of the MEMAC Agreement, a completed Authorized Representative Contact Information Form, found on Attachment A in the Compact Booklet and a local government resolution authorizing MEMAC participation similar to the sample provided on page 30 of the Compact Booklet. No other action is required and additional information regarding participation is also included in your Compact Booklet.

Additionally – for those jurisdictions that would like to immediately become a member of MEMAC, we would like to invite you to attend a group signing media event to be held in September. If you are interested in be a part of the media event, please contact Sgt. Mark. We would also be happy to participate or assist you with your own media event.

How do you request assistance under MEMAC?

A participating government can implement MEMAC when it either becomes affected by, or is under imminent threat of a disaster, emergency, or other serious threat to public health and safety. An authorized representative of requesting agency may invoke this agreement by communicating a request for assistance by any practical means to the Emergency Management Division through the Michigan State Police Operations Center, which is the central, 24-hour, emergency communications center for the state of Michigan.

The MSP Operations Center will immediately contact the Emergency Management Division who will in turn contact the requesting agency to begin the process of providing the needed assistance and coordinating the response of requested resources. All verbal requests for assistance must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours of the original request. Again – additional and more specific information regarding requests for assistance under the compact can be found in your booklet. Your booklet also provides guidelines on how to provide assistance when requested.

In summary:

MEMAC provides form and structure setting forth common procedures and expectations.

It solves potential problems and concerns related to liability, insurance, and reimbursement up-front.

MEMAC has the active support of all local government management and professional emergency responder member organizations statewide.

The agreement provides for the reimbursement of all eligible costs from the requesting party to the assisting party.

MEMAC supports the subsequent reimbursement of eligible costs from the federal government to the requesting party, in the event of a federal disaster declaration.

MEMAC is supplemental to, and does not affect, existing day-to-day mutual aid/assistance agreements between adjacent or nearby localities.

Mutual assistance under MEMAC may be enacted even if you have utilized/enacted an existing local mutual aid agreement.

As once again demonstrated by the power black out within the last week – large scale emergencies and disasters know no governmental boundaries and quickly drain local resources to the point where we have no choice but to mutually agree to assist one another in times of crisis.

While I know that not every jurisdiction will agree with the specifics of some of the language in the agreement, I'm convinced that we have a workable document and a good starting point for an intrastate assistance compact. As we learn more and discover ways to improve the compact, I'm sure that future revisions can be made to the agreement.

I thank you again for the allowing me the opportunity to share MEMAC with you and I urge you, your governmental leaders and other officials to give strong consideration to becoming a participating member of MEMAC.

Thank You!